

Message Text

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TO WHITE HUSE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 027802

EXDIS, DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS - FOR BRZEZINSKI ONLY

FOL SEOUL 0911 SENT ACTION SECSTATE FEB 2, 1978 REPEATED
TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 911

EXDIS - DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, KS, US

SUBJ: TONGSUN PARK AFFAIR: CONGRESSIONAL ASPECTS AND PRESIDENTIAL
LETTER

1. I MET WITH FONMIN AT HIS REQUEST MORNING OF FEBRUARY 2.
FONMIN REQUESTED MEETING TO PROVIDE ME WITH COPY OF PRESIDENT
PARK'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER. HE SAID THAT THE SEOUL
VIEW WAS THAT THE EXCHANGE HAD BEEN VERY USEFUL, HAD MADE A
VERY REAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS, AND
SHOULD BE CONTINUED IN THE FUTURE. I TOLD FONMIN THAT
I AGREED EXCHANGE OF LETTERS HAD BEEN VERY HELPFUL IN
IMPROVING RELATIONS AS WERE RECENT STEPS BY ROKG.

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2. FONMIN THEN TURNED TO TONGSUN PARK AFFAIR AND QUESTION
OF APPEARANCE BEFORE CONGRESS. HE BEGAN BY SAYING THAT ROK
INITIAL HOPE HAD BEEN THAT MATTER WOULD BE SOLVED BY
PROVISION OF TESTIMONY RECEIVED IN SEOUL TO ETHICS
COMMITTEES OF BOTH SIDES. FOLLOWING AMBASSADOR KIM'S
RETURN, HOWEVER, POSITION HAD BEEN RECONSIDERED AND
NEW APPROCH DEVELOPED. BASICALLY, MATTER WOULD BE

LEFT TO AMBASSADOR KIM TO HANDLE IN WASHINGTON, ALTHOUGH FONMIN AND I MIGHT HAVE TO MEET ON OCCASION TO SUPPORT KIM'S EFFORT TO ACHIEVE SATISFACTORY SOLUTION. HE SAID INITIAL TALKS BETWEEN KIM AND SPEAKER O'NEILL, SENATOR STEVENSON AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE WERE THE FIRST STEPS IN THIS NEW APPROACH.

3. I SAID WE WERE CONVINCED THE COOPERATIVE APPROACH NOW BEING TAKEN BY THE ROKG REGARDING APPEARANCE BY TONGSUN PARK AT EXECUTIVE SESSIONS OF THE ETHICS COMMITTEES OF BOTH HOUSES WAS THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION. I THEN TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THIS OPENING TO STRESS THE NEED FOR AN EARLY TRIP TO WASHINGTON FOR THIS PURPOSE, SOMETIME DURING FEBRUARY, BY TONGSUN PARK. I THOUGHT THE SPEAKER WAS INTENT UPON CLEARING THE DECKS WITH CONGRESS BEFORE THE SECURITY ASSISTANCE DEBATE GOT UNDERWAY. THE HEARINGS WERE NOW SCHEDULED TO BEGIN ON FEBRUARY 21, WITH SECRETARY VANCE APPEARING THE FIRST DAY AND SECRETARY BROWN APPEARING ON FEBRUARY 22. THE COMMITTEE HAS SCHEDULED A FULL HALF-DAY FOR KOREA, WHICH INDICATES THE IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO OUR SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM HERE. I THEN AGAIN STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF GETTING THE TONGSUN PARK MATTER OUT OF THE WAY AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.

4. MOVING ON, I DREW THE FONMIN'S ATTENTION TO THE STATEMENT MADE BY THE DEPARTMENT REGARDING THE POSSIBLE CONFIDENTIAL

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APPEARANCE AS A WITNESS BEFORE CONGRESS OF FORMER AMBASSADOR KIM DONG JO. I ALSO STRESSED THE STATEMENT MADE BY SPEAKER O'NEILL ON THIS SUBJECT FOLLOWING HIS RECENT MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR KIM. THE FONMIN SAID THAT THE DEPARTMENT STATEMENT WAS MOST HELPFUL IN A MATTER ON WHICH THE ROKG COULD NOT MODIFY ITS POSITION. THE COMMENTS OF THE SPEAKER HE SAW AS VISIBLE PROOF THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAD, IN FACT, BEEN MAKING ITS VIEWS KNOWN ON THE HILL. I NOTED THAT WHILE THERE MAY CONTINUE TO BE SOME STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD ON THIS MATTER, I WAS REASSURED THAT THE LEADERSHIP IN BOTH HOUSE AND SENATE NOW WERE AWARE OF THE INTERNATIONAL IMPLICATION OF THIS MATTER.

5. COMMENT: DEPARTMENT STATEMENT ON IMMUNITY SHOULD PROVE VERY USEFUL IN FACILITATING OTHER FORMS OF ROKG COOPERATION WITH CONGRESSIONAL ETHICS COMMITTEES. SNEIDER UNQUOTE VANCE

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